

MONTANA



School Bus Driver MANUAL

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FOREWORD

Montana school bus drivers share with parents, school boards and school administrators, a tremendous responsibility for the safety and welfare of some 40,000 Montana pupils who daily ride school buses for a total of more than 11½ million miles yearly. The school bus driver is responsible for cooperation with the school district which operates the bus program. Further, he is responsible at all times for the inspection and careful maintenance of his vehicle. **Most** important, through his own skill, knowledge, and judgment the bus driver is directly responsible for the safe conduct of his passengers. In addition, because of these major responsibilities and his constant daily contact with pupils and their parents, the school bus driver has also a unique responsibility for good public relations and interpretation of the school bus program.

This Manual provides to all school bus drivers and school officials pertinent information regarding safe and efficient school bus transportation. The Manual includes safe-driving procedures and Montana laws and regulations for school bus operation and supervision and the control of bus passengers. It is our earnest hope that study of the Manual will assist all those concerned with school transportation in even safer and more efficient school bus operations, and thus help assure the maintenance of Montana's outstanding school bus safety record.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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SCHOOL BUS ADMINISTRATION

1. The Board of Trustees of each school district or county high school has the authority to determine if bus transportation is to be provided for the district and to set up a bus transportation program within the framework of the law and of regulations of the State Board of Education and the Montana Highway Patrol. (Section 75-3401, R.C.M. 1947; Attorney General's Opinion No. 57, Vol. 23.)
2. The bus transportation program may be operated by means of either district-owned buses or contracted buses owned by private individuals.
3. The school bus driver of both contracted and district-owned buses must comply with the rules and regulations of the Board of Trustees. He must acquaint himself with the school policies, attend meetings called by the school administrator when he is invited to do so and must promptly file all required reports.
4. As an aid to the equalization of educational opportunity for school children, the State Legislature has made provisions for a school district or county high school to receive state and county reimbursement for a portion of the costs of its bus transportation program. (Sections 75-3407, paragraph j; 75-3413, 75-3414, R.C.M. 1947.)
5. Montana State Law gives the County Transportation Committee supervisory powers within a county over the administration of school bus transportation for which school districts and county high schools are entitled to state and county reimbursement. (See page 5 this Manual.) (Section 75-3401, R.C.M. 1947; Section 75-3412, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 105, Session Laws 1955; Attorney General's Opinion No. 56, Vol. 26.)
6. The law gives the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Montana Highway Patrol regulatory and supervisory powers over school bus transportation within the state and provides the right of appeal from the decision of the County Transportation Committee to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Sections 75-3308, 75-3401, R.C.M. 1947; Section 75-3412, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 105, Session Laws 1955.)

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

1. The driver of a school bus (whether the bus is contracted or district-owned) must be approved by the Board of Trustees of the school district for which the bus is to be driven, and certification of such approval must be filed by the Board of Trustees with the County Superintendent of Schools (Section 75-3308, paragraph 3, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 172, Session Laws 1955) on a form supplied by the State Department of Public Instruction. The Montana School Bus Driver Certificate is proof that a driver meets the qualifications of the school transportation law. The Board of Trustees issues a certificate to each qualified and authorized driver and files copies of the certificate with the County Superintendent and with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
2. A school bus driver must be the holder of an appropriate chauffeur's license issued by the State Highway Patrol. A driver's license is not sufficient. In order to hold such a chauffeur's license the driver must:
 - a. be at least twenty-one (21) years of age;
 - b. have had at least one (1) year of driving experience prior to the issuance of the license;
 - c. have filed with the Montana Highway Patrol Board one (1) or more certificates signed by at least three (3) responsible people to whom he is well-known certifying as to his good character and habits;
 - d. have fully satisfied the Board as to his competency and fitness to be employed.

(Sections 31-128, R.C.M. 1947; 75-3308, paragraph 3-c, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 172, Session Laws 1955, and Chapter 68, Session Laws 1961.)
3. The State Law requires that a school bus driver file with the Board of Trustees evidence of having passed a satisfactory physical examination signed by a licensed phy-

sician of the State of Montana on a blank provided by the State Board of Education. (Section 75-3308, paragraph d, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 172, Session Laws 1955.) State Board of Education regulations require that such a physical examination be taken and report filed every three (3) years. The purpose of these requirements is to insure that the driver is free of physical and mental defects of such a character and extent as to affect his ability to drive safely and assume responsibility for the safety and welfare of the pupils he transports.

4. A school bus driver must be the holder of a valid standard first aid certificate (Section 75-3406, R.C.M. 1947) prior to January 31 of the school year for which he is employed. Such a certificate is granted upon the successful completion of a standard Red Cross first aid course. It is valid for three years and must be renewed before the end of the period by completion of a standard refresher course. If a driver is replaced in the middle of the year, a grace period of two months will be granted to enable the replacement driver to complete the approved training.
5. The school bus driver must be of good moral character (Section 75-3308, paragraph 3-b, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 172, Session Laws 1955) and conduct himself in a manner that is worthy of school bus drivers as a group and of the school district which employs him.
6. He should be clean and neat in appearance, must not use tobacco while on duty and must never drive the bus when he has had an alcoholic beverage.
7. He should have an understanding of children and the emotional stability essential to the maintaining of good bus discipline.
8. He should be courteous to his fellow workers, the pupils and the public.
9. He must cooperate with the school administration and his fellow workers in carrying out the policies of the school.

MONTANA SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS ASSOCIATION

The purpose of the Montana School Bus Drivers Association is to recognize the importance of the school bus drivers in the school program of any community and the state; to recognize and encourage the importance of safety in school bus driving and its contributions to safety education; to encourage better administration of the school bus program in the interest of economy and efficiency; to study and promote the welfare of school bus drivers for the better efficiency of the transportation program and better morale among school bus drivers. Any regularly employed and qualified bus driver and certified school person directly responsible for the transportation program in the district is eligible to become a member of this association. Any person who derives any part or all of his livelihood from some phase of the school transportation program may be eligible to become an associate member of the association. A life membership in the association may be granted to any person who accumulates 25 years as a school bus driver. The influence of this association has been significant in the high standard of performance achieved by Montana school bus drivers. The safety record is one in which every bus driver can be justly proud. The association has been one of the sponsors of the annual School Bus Drivers Conference. A copy of the constitution and by-laws of the association is available upon request from the State Department of Public Instruction, Pupil Transportation Supervisor, Helena, Montana.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS CONFERENCE

The Montana School Bus Drivers Association, in cooperation with the Montana Highway Patrol and the State Department of Public Instruction, sponsors annually a School Bus Drivers Conference. The program of this conference provides for discussion and instruction on subjects of interest to all bus drivers.

AWARDS

1. The Montana School Bus Drivers Association sponsors a driving award program. Information with reference to this program is available from the State Department of Public Instruction, Pupil Transportation Supervisor, Helena, Montana.

2. Each school bus driver of the state who has three years of accident-free service and whose bus has satisfactorily passed the school bus inspection of the Montana Highway Patrol is entitled to a Merit Award.

Certificates of award are signed by the Supervisor of the State Highway Patrol, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and local school officials.

ELIGIBLE SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTEES

1. School district and county high school authorities have jurisdiction over who rides and who does not ride a school bus within the limitations of the law.
2. The law states that in order for a bus to receive the maximum state and county reimbursement, its passengers, occupying at least seventy-five per cent (75%) of its seating capacity, must:
 - a. live three (3) or more miles from the nearest operating school (Section 75-3409, R.C.M. 1947; Attorney General's Opinion No. 56, Vol. 26);
 - b. be residents of the State of Montana and attend a Montana public school, or attend an elementary school outside the State of Montana if the school attended is in a school district contiguous to the Montana school district in which the pupils reside, or high school in another state if the high school attended is in a county adjoining the State of Montana and if official approval has been granted for out-of-state attendance (Sections 75-1625, 75-3409, 75-4146, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 21, Session Laws 1963);
 - c. reside with parents or guardians who maintain a permanent home within the boundaries of the district of the school of attendance or have received official approval for attendance of school in a district other than that of residence (Section 75-3409, R.C.M. 1947);
 - d. be not younger than six (6) years of age nor older than twenty-one (21) (Section 75-3409, R.C.M. 1947).State and county reimbursement will be reduced below the maximum in proportion to the reduction of eligible transportees below seventy-five per cent (75%) of the approved seating capacity.

3. In addition, reimbursement may be made for students who have physical handicaps that make it advisable they be provided with transportation. (Section 75-5003, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 108, Session Laws 1959, Chapter 41, Session Laws 1961, Chapter 243, Session Laws 1963 and Chapter 96 and 142, Session Laws 1965.)
4. Buses carrying pupils in excess of their rated capacity will not be approved by the State Highway Patrol and hence will not be eligible for state or county reimbursement. Thirteen (13) inches of seating space per pupil is the accepted minimum standard for school bus capacity.
5. Children attending other than public schools may ride in a school bus if they secure a permit to do so from the clerk of the school district and if the parents or guardians of such children pay their proportionate share of the cost of the transportation provided. (Section 75-3408, R.C.M. 1947.)
6. The law also authorizes school boards of trustees to provide transportation for pupils living less than three miles from public schools and for this purpose may make such charges as may be necessary to pay the costs of providing such transportation. The transportation fund is to be utilized for the purpose of budgeting and accounting for all collections of such charges. All school bus vehicles and drivers utilized in transportation under three miles must meet the standards and qualifications as set forth in the Transportation Act. (Sections 75-1641, 75-1642, 75-1643, and 75-1644, R.C.M. 1947, Chapter 249, Session Laws 1965.)

USE OF THE BUS FOR NON-SCHOOL AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

1. The use of the school bus for other than school purposes, or for charter services, makes the vehicle liable to the gross vehicle weight tax in the amount of \$7.00 per seat. School buses that make trips in connection with extra-curricular activities are exempt from paying the gross vehicle weight tax only when such activities are considered a regular part of the school program and are being supported by funds provided by the Board of Trustees of the school district or county high school for which the bus is operated and fares are **not** collected from students or teachers participating in the trip. (Section 53-615, R.C.M. 1947.)

2. The Montana Highway Commission has ruled that tax exemption will not be extended when trips are made for pay by contracted buses unless such trips or the activities for which they are made are specifically covered in the contract and the pay is part of the contract price. The Commission has also ruled that this does not apply to trips where travel does not exceed a fifteen (15) mile radius from incorporated cities and towns.

"SCHOOL BUS" MARKINGS

1. Every approved school bus used for transportation of school children shall bear upon the front and rear thereon a plainly visible sign containing the words "School Bus" in letters not less than eight (8) inches in height. (Section 32-2197, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 263, Session Laws 1955, Chapter 250, Session Laws 1965; Section 75-3308, paragraph 5, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 172, Session Laws 1955.)
2. The driver must keep this sign clean at all times.
3. When a school bus is being operated upon a highway for purposes other than actual transportation of children either to or from school functions, all markings thereon indicating "School Bus" shall be covered or concealed. (Section 32-2197, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 263, Session Laws 1955, Chapter 250, Session Laws 1965; Section 75-3308, paragraph 5, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 172, Session Laws 1955.)

HIGHWAY PATROL INSPECTION

1. Every school bus must be inspected annually by the Montana Highway Patrol and must meet specifications and standards adopted by the State Board of Education as required by law. (Section 75-3308, paragraphs 1, 6, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 172, Session Laws 1955, Chapter 250, Session Laws 1965.) These standards conform closely with those set up by the National Commission on Safety Education, National Education Association. They are outlined in the publication "Minimum Standards for School Buses in Montana," copies of which are available upon request from the State Department of Public Instruction, Pupil Transportation Supervisor, Helena, Montana.

2. Any bus which, upon inspection, is found defective will not qualify for state reimbursement until the defect is remedied. If the defect is not remedied by December 1, the bus will not qualify for state reimbursement for any portion of the school year, regardless of when thereafter the defect is corrected. A second inspection by the State Highway Patrol is required to certify the correction of defects.
3. Forms for completing the inspection are supplied by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The driver should obtain one of these forms through his school administrator and check his own bus before he presents it for inspection to the inspecting officer.
4. The highway patrolman will arrange a schedule of inspection through the County Superintendent of Schools. Reinspection will be made at the convenience of the patrolman.
5. The highway patrolman will give one copy of the completed inspection form to the appropriate district official.
6. In addition to making an annual inspection the Highway Patrol makes occasional spot checks of school buses. The bus driver should have his bus clean and ready for such inspection at all times.

DRIVER RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUPIL CONDUCT

1. The driver, together with the school administrator, has the responsibility for discipline on the school bus.
2. It is the duty of the driver to see that conduct aboard the bus is orderly and acceptable. He should strive to build morale and a cooperative spirit among his passengers. This can best be done if he himself is courteous and helpful, if he maintains a friendly, cheerful and businesslike manner and if, in his relations with his passengers, he is neither over-lenient nor over-strict.
3. In many schools, school bus citizenship is part of the safety education program of the regular classroom. The school bus driver should cooperate fully with such programs.
4. Drivers should cooperate with administrators and teachers in encouraging the drawing up of school bus safety codes by pupils in safety education classes. Copies of such codes should be posted in the classroom where safety instruction

is given and inside each bus, and they should be placed in the hands of every pupil who rides a bus. Drivers should occasionally discuss the regulations with bus passengers and should request them to take the code home and discuss it with their parents. A sample code or school bus citizenship chart is available upon request from the State Department of Public Instruction, Pupil Transportation Supervisor, Helena, Montana. It was developed by the Committee on Pupil Discipline at the School Bus Drivers Conference held in Bozeman in 1955.

5. If reprimand or disciplinary action is necessary on the part of the school bus driver, he must stop his bus. The driver should never attempt to perform any disciplinary action while the bus is in motion. The very act of stopping the bus lends emphasis to the situation. The driver should stand up and speak to the offender in a courteous manner but in a firm voice. There should be no anger involved. When it seems advisable, offending pupils should be moved to sit close to the driver. If one or more pupils are continual offenders, the driver should discuss the problem with them privately and thus refrain from bringing it constantly to the attention of all his passengers.
6. A pupil should never be put off the bus to walk home. If necessary to emphasize disciplinary action, the pupil should be told that his privilege to ride is taken away until satisfactory arrangements have been made between his parents and the school principal. In serious problem cases, a meeting of the teacher, driver, principal and pupils may be necessary.
7. The assignment of pupils to regular seats in the bus by the driver, or cooperatively by the driver and school administrator, may aid in good discipline and orderly evacuation in case of accident. Physically handicapped children should be assigned seats near the bus door.

SCHOOL BUS STUDENT PATROL

1. The driver can take care of his duties more effectively if he has the help of a student patrol. The student patrol does not relieve the bus driver of any of his responsibilities but does assist him in the execution of his duties and enables him to perform some of them in a safer manner.

2. Selection of members of the patrol should be made carefully in cooperation with the school administrator. As a rule, members of the patrol should be older bus passengers who live near the end of the bus route. They must be cooperative in their attitude and take pride in their work.
3. Insignia and equipment for identification (belts, caps, badges) can be purchased at a minimum cost from the Montana Automobile Association, Box 1703, Helena, Montana.
4. A manual, "Safety Patrol Handbook," on organization and supervision of a school safety patrol, is available upon request from the State Department of Public Instruction, Pupil Transportation Supervisor, Helena, Montana, or from the County Superintendent of Schools.
5. Duties that are commonly performed by patrol members are:
 - a. keeping aisles free of books and other articles;
 - b. preventing anyone from tampering with the emergency door;
 - c. preventing pupils from sticking arms, hands or heads out the bus windows or throwing objects out of the bus;
 - d. seeing that there is no shouting and loud talking, scuffling, playing or fighting on the bus that may distract the driver and cause an accident; keeping children from shouting at passers-by;
 - e. making sure that all pupils are seated before the signal is given for the bus to start moving and keeping them from moving around in the bus while the bus is in motion;
 - f. assisting with loading and unloading (see page 14 this Manual);
 - g. helping little children cross busy highways (see page 15 this Manual);
 - h. helping flag the bus across railroad crossings;
 - i. acting as flagman when the bus is backing;

- j. checking license numbers of cars that violate the school bus passing law (see page 16 this Manual);
 - k. helping as directed in case of a road emergency or accident.
6. It is usual practice for one patrol member to be stationed near the front of the bus and one at the back, and for each to be assigned duties that can be most conveniently performed from his station.

BUS ROUTES

1. The initial planning and subsequent administration of school bus routes or service areas is the duty of the school district or county high school authorities. The planning of such routes or service areas is subject to the approval of the County Transportation Committee and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Section 75-3412, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 105, Session Laws 1955.)
2. School bus drivers should feel free to make recommendations in regard to establishing routes.
3. A school bus route should be established with due consideration of the sum total of local conditions affecting the safety, economic soundness and convenience of its operation including road conditions, condition of bridges and culverts, hazardous crossings, presence of truck routes and arterial highways, extreme weather conditions and variations, length of route, number of families and children to be serviced, availability of turn-around points, capacity of bus, etc.
4. Bus routes should be planned to eliminate overlapping and empty bus miles insofar as possible.
5. In general, buses should be routed so that they travel over only graded, surfaced (asphalt, gravel, etc.) roads. Inclement weather often causes cancellation of a bus trip on other than this type of highway.
6. Buses should be routed so as to pass as near to the residence of the majority of their passengers as good, safe, economical travel conditions will warrant.

7. Bus routes cannot be approved to drive up to the house of each patron to pick up the children. Bus transportation is a group service and not an individual taxi service. Many private roads do not provide safe routes for heavily loaded buses. Moreover, the occurrence of accidents on private roads can give rise to complex problems in connection with liability related to personal injuries, property damage, etc. The law contemplates that children can be expected to walk a mile and a half to get on the bus if necessary. (Section 75-3407, paragraph e, R.C.M. 1947.)
8. In exceptional cases it may be advisable for the bus to leave the highway and enter the private lanes of individuals, i.e. in emergencies as stormy weather and illness, to pick up crippled children, or to turn around at the end of the route.
9. Age of children and the fact that small children cannot be expected to walk as far as older children should be taken into consideration in planning the route.
10. Timing of the route is important. In this connection, it should be borne in mind that the law provides no school child attending an elementary school shall be required by any school board to ride the school bus, under average road conditions, more than one hour without consent of the child's parent or guardian. (Section 75-3407, paragraph k, R.C.M. 1947.)
11. Parents should be referred to the school administrator for any request of change in routes, stops, or schedules.

OPERATING ON SCHEDULE

1. The bus driver should make a schedule for his bus route showing time of arrival at each stop and at each school, or schools, in the morning. The schedule should be set up after several trials and should be built for maximum safety in the operation of the school bus and not for speed in making the trip.
2. Time of arrival at the school or schools will be worked out in cooperation with the school administrator. Every effort should be made to keep the length of the school day

at a minimum. With this in mind, the schedule should be arranged so that the bus arrives at the school the shortest time deemed feasible before the first class takes up.

3. A copy of the schedule should be left in the central office of each school that the bus serves, one should be posted in the bus and one sent home to each parent.
4. The driver should feel responsible for keeping his bus on schedule insofar as possible. Parents should be informed through the children of any change in the established schedule. They should be advised that in bad weather it may be necessary to advance the schedule without warning to allow for possible delays.
5. Parents and children should be encouraged by the driver to observe punctuality with reference to the bus schedule. Maintenance of a schedule helps to assure good relations between the driver and pupils and parents, and between parents and school authorities.
6. Safety should never be sacrificed to the maintenance of the schedule. When unforeseen circumstances or conditions, such as unusual weather or road conditions, cause the bus to become off-schedule the driver should never try to make up time by driving at a speed he would not ordinarily consider to be safe.

BUS STOPS

1. Buses should stop only at designated loading places approved by school authorities. Exceptions should be made only in cases of emergencies.
2. The driver should never permit a child to leave the bus except at his or her regular stop unless requested to do so by written permission to the school administrator signed by the parent or legal guardian of the child in question.
3. Bus stops should be chosen with the principle of safety in mind. Points should be selected where motorists approaching from either direction will have a clear view of the bus for a distance of at least three hundred (300) to five hun-

dred (500) feet. Stops should never be made over the brow of a hill, on the outgoing end of a curve, on a blind curve, at a road intersection or on a steep grade.

4. It is sometimes advisable that waiting shelters be built in isolated areas to provide shelter from cold winds or for use in an emergency. The bus driver is often in a position to make recommendations as to the need for these.

LOADING AND UNLOADING AT THE SCHOOL

1. The school administrator in cooperation with the driver has the responsibility for setting up a loading and unloading program for school buses at the school. A well-planned and definite program is especially important when several buses are loaded at the same time at the same school. Highway patrolmen are glad to discuss the loading problem with school administrators and assist in planning a program.
2. Loading sites should be selected away from heavy traffic of either pupils or motorists preferably on the school grounds. Each bus should be assigned a definite parking spot. This contributes to orderly loading and reduces accident hazards.
3. When no suitable loading site is available on the school grounds the bus should be loaded and unloaded out of traffic at the side of the road adjoining the grounds. If necessary, the curb should be painted yellow and designated as "School Loading Zone" and all parking prohibited during loading hours.
4. The bus driver should always be on time at his loading position and should be on hand continuously while the bus is being loaded and unloaded.
5. If the bus has a student patrol, one member of the patrol should be required to report promptly to his bus after school and help with the supervision of the loading. His station is outside the front door. He should help form the pupils in a straight line and prevent scuffling and pushing.
6. The patrol member who sits at the front of the bus should be the first person to step off the bus when the bus stops for unloading and should help supervise other pupils as they get off the bus.

LOADING AND UNLOADING ON THE HIGHWAY

1. The biggest problem in a public school transportation program is getting the children on and off the school bus and safely across the highway without interfering with the normal flow of traffic. The School Bus Stop and Passing Law (Section 74-3310, R.C.M. 1947; Section 32-2197, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 263, Session Laws 1959 and Chapter 250, Session Laws 1965) and the law making mandatory a bus prewarning and stop signaling system (Section 32-21-132, paragraphs b and c, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 263, Session Laws 1955, Chapter 4, paragraph a, Session Laws 1959, and Chapter 250, Session Laws 1965) were enacted as an aid to the solution of the problem.
2. The School Bus Stop and Passing Law states that "the driver of a vehicle upon a highway outside the corporate limits of any city or town upon meeting or overtaking from either direction any school bus which has stopped or is preparing to stop on the highway for the purpose of receiving or discharging any school children shall stop the vehicle before reaching such school bus when there is in operation on said bus a visual signal" as specified by law for use of school buses on such occasions "and said driver shall not proceed until such school bus resumes motion, or is signaled by the school bus driver to proceed as the visual signals are no longer actuated." The law also provides that "amber flashing lights shall be actuated by the driver approximately one hundred and fifty (150) feet in cities, and approximately five hundred (500) feet in other areas before the bus is stopped to receive or discharge school children." (Section 32-2197, paragraph a, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 263, Session Laws 1959, Chapter 100, Session Laws 1961, and Chapter 250, Session Laws 1965.)
3. It also states that every bus used for the transportation of school children shall "be equipped with signal lamps mounted as high and as widely spaced laterally as practicable, displaying to the front two (2) red and two (2) amber alternating flashing lights and to the rear two (2) red and two (2) amber alternating flashing lights. These lights shall have sufficient intensity to be visible at five hundred

(500) feet in normal sunlight. The warning lights shall be of a type, and located on each bus, as prescribed by the state board of education and approved by the supervisor of the highway patrol." (Section 32-21-132, paragraph c, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 250, Sessions Laws 1965.)

4. The above law further states that "the driver of a vehicle upon a highway with separate roadways need not stop upon meeting or passing a school bus which is on a different roadway or when upon a controlled-access highway and the school bus is stopped in a loading zone which is part of or adjacent to such a highway and where pedestrians are not permitted to cross the roadway." (Section 32-21-197, paragraph d, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 263, Session Laws 1959.)
5. Enforcement of this law requires a well-planned and persistent public relations program for informing motorists of its provisions and of the necessity for them. The program should stress that the law was enacted by the State Legislature to meet the demands of the public for measures that would better assure the safety of Montana's school children.
6. Enforcement is aided when a supplementary program is set up for informing motorists of violations of the law. The student patrol assists the driver by checking the license numbers of violators. A memorandum giving instructions for conducting such a program is available upon request from the State Department of Public Instruction, Pupil Transportation Supervisor, Helena, Montana.
7. The bus driver is responsible for the use of the prewarning and stop signaling system and the consequent protection of his passengers. Failure to use the system constitutes negligence on the part of the driver. (Section 32-21-197, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 263, Session Laws 1955, and Chapter 250, Session Laws 1965.)
8. The signaling system must be used with judgment and courtesy. Its abuse causes resentment on the part of the public. A driver should allow approaching vehicles time to stop or pass before the red flashing lights are used.
9. The flashing lights can be used legally, only when preparing to load or unload pupils and when loading or unload-

ing pupils. The law states that "it shall be unlawful to operate any flashing warning signal light on any school bus except when any said school bus is preparing to stop or is stopped on a highway for the purpose of permitting school children to board or alight from said school bus." (Section 32-2198, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 263, Session Laws 1955, and Chapter 250, Session Laws 1965; Section 75-3308, paragraph 6, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 172, Session Laws 1955, and Chapter 250, Session Laws 1965.)

10. The driver should bring the vehicle to a complete stop at the right hand side of the road and parallel with the center line. He should not pull off the pavement and onto the shoulder.
11. He should make sure that traffic has stopped from both directions before opening the bus door. Students should be required to remain seated until the bus has stopped.
12. If pupils must cross the road after getting off the bus, they should be required first to look both ways to make sure no traffic is approaching and await a signal from the driver that the way is clear. They should always cross ahead of the bus.
13. If the bus has a student patrol, the member in front of the bus should supervise the pupils' crossing of the highway. He should take a position in line with the front fender about ten feet in front of the bus. He should look both ways to see that the traffic has stopped and then wait for the driver to signal that the way is clear before he signals pupils to cross. If the children are small, the patrol member should conduct them across the highway. He should always walk ahead of his escorts when making a crossing.
14. After making a passenger stop, the driver should not move the bus until he has made sure that the students crossing the highway are clear of traveled portion, and those that live on the right hand side of the road have cleared the bus and until the student patrol has boarded the bus and confirmed the driver's observation that these conditions have been met.

15. As soon as he is certain it is safe to do so, the driver should shut the door and turn off his flashing stop lights. This will permit waiting motorists to pass. The driver may then start his bus on its way.

SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES

1. The safety of the pupils riding the bus and the consequent practice of safe driving rules should be the first consideration of the driver at all times.
2. The school bus driver must be thoroughly acquainted with all the state traffic laws, must observe all highway signs and must follow all official driving regulations meticulously. He must also be familiar with the traffic ordinances of the city in which he operates.
3. He must drive with both hands on the steering wheel and keep his attention and eyes on the road ahead. He should never try to discipline pupils with the bus in motion.
4. The school bus driver shall not permit students to stand while the bus is in motion.
5. The speed of any school bus must be kept within reasonable limits of control and must be adjusted to the conditions of the road. The law permits a school district to set its own speed limit for its school buses. (Section 75-3406, R.C.M. 1947.) A safe driving speed for a school bus on paved straight roads is forty-five (45) miles per hour. Poor roads will naturally require a slower speed.
6. The law requires that, before crossing the tracks of a railroad, a school bus must stop within fifty (50) feet but not less than fifteen (15) feet from the nearest rail and the driver must check both directions for oncoming trains. After determining that the track is clear, the driver must proceed across the track in low gear. No attempt is to be made to shift to a higher gear range while on the track. No stop need be made at a crossing where a police officer or a traffic-controlled signal directs traffic to proceed. (Section 32-2193, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 263, Session Laws 1955; Section 75-3310, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 172, Session Laws 1955.) If the bus has a student patrol, the patrol member seated in front of the bus should go out and signal the bus across the track.

7. Backing a loaded bus or an empty bus in a loading zone is an extremely dangerous practice even under the most favorable conditions. No driver should do so unless absolutely necessary or until he is absolutely certain the way is clear behind the bus.
8. School buses must not turn around on the highway. All turning around should be done off the highway at a spot where visibility in both directions is good and which allows for plenty of clearance. Under no conditions should a driver nose his bus onto a side road and then back onto the highway to change direction.
9. The driver must keep to the right of the center line at all times except when overtaking and passing another vehicle. Passing other vehicles should be avoided insofar as possible. If it becomes necessary to pass slow-moving traffic, extreme caution should be used.
10. The driver should maintain sufficient distance between his bus and the vehicle ahead for him to stop safely under any conditions. While driving on the open highway the distance should be a minimum of three hundred (300) feet when following another school bus or truck and a minimum of one hundred (100) feet when following any other vehicle.
11. When stopping on the highway to load or unload pupils, the driver must follow practices that conform to the School Bus Stop and Passing Law. (See page 15 this Manual for prescribed and recommended procedure.)
12. The driver should exercise extreme caution at intersections. He should always be willing to yield his right-of-way if it will prevent an accident. When making a turn at an intersection he should always properly position his vehicle ahead of the turn, give the proper signals and complete the turn at a slow speed and only when he can do so safely.
13. The bus must never be operated with the clutch disengaged or the transmission in neutral except when changing gears.
14. The driver must be watchful for objects on the road. In open range country he must watch for animals crossing the highway.

15. A school bus must not fill gas tanks while pupils are on the bus.
16. He must not allow any gasoline, highly inflammable or explosive material or firearms to be carried on the bus. He should not permit dogs or other animals in the bus.
17. Pupils shall use the emergency door only in case of emergency.
18. The school bus driver shall not alight from the bus without first properly turning the front wheels, setting the brakes, stopping the engine, locking the ignition and removing the key.
19. No other person than the driver should be permitted to operate the bus while pupils are on board. All substitute drivers must have the approval of the school authorities. (Section 75-3308, paragraph 3, R.C.M. 1947, as amended by Chapter 172, Session Laws 1955.)

EMERGENCIES AND ACCIDENTS

1. In case of road emergency, the driver should permit only his student patrol to get out of the bus to help determine whether the bus is disabled or whether minor adjustment or minor repair can be made.
2. If the breakdown is of a purely mechanical nature, the bus should be moved off the road or if this is not possible, flares should be set out to warn oncoming traffic in either direction. When minor repairs are called for, the driver should make them if possible and proceed to complete his trip.
3. A driver should never leave his bus while he has pupils aboard. If examination shows that help is needed and the bus does not have two-way radio equipment, a request for help should be sent by a passer-by or by an older pupil or student patrol.
4. The driver should keep the children on the bus until help arrives and, if stalled during cold weather, he should make every effort to keep the bus warm.
5. In case the bus is involved in an accident, the Highway Patrol must be notified immediately so that an official investigation can be made. If the accident occurs in a city

having a police department, notify the City Police. The bus should not be moved until after officers arrive. Sufficient debris may be moved to allow traffic to pass but a careful note should be kept of all articles moved. The driver must assemble all necessary information in regard to an accident before any of the parties leave the scene of the accident. He must carry an Accident Report blank in the bus at all times.

6. If any students are injured the driver's first duty is the application of first aid. It must be kept in mind that such aid is not a substitute for treatment by a doctor but merely emergency treatment to be applied before the doctor arrives. If any pupils are taken to the hospital, it is the duty of the driver to notify the parents and school officials as soon as possible.
7. All school bus accidents must be reported to the Highway Patrol on a form provided for the purpose as required by law, and to the school authorities and County Superintendent of Schools for transmission to the State Department of Public Instruction, as required by regulation of the State Board of Education, on the State Department's Form T-8. All accidents within a city must also be reported to the City Police Department.
8. The four conditions under which most school bus accidents have occurred in Montana are: making a left-hand turn, another vehicle following the bus too closely, driving on icy roads, and another vehicle passing the bus. Extra caution should be observed when these conditions exist.
9. A program for school bus evacuation drills should be set up. A memorandum of instruction for the conduct of such drills is available upon request from the State Department of Public Instruction, Pupil Transportation Supervisor, Helena, Montana.
10. The Department's publication "Minimum Standards for School Buses in Montana" includes specifications for first aid kits and fire extinguishers as well as for other safety equipment.

BUS MAINTENANCE

1. A good preventive maintenance program minimizes the possibility of accidents due to mechanical failure and reduces the cost of operation. Combined with expert handling of the bus by the driver, such a program will prolong the life of the vehicle and increase the quality of service rendered. The program must be based on thorough and periodic inspections by the driver, transportation supervisor, bus owner, mechanic or other persons charged with this responsibility, and by a regular procedure for servicing and correction of defects.
2. The Highway Patrol annual inspection is not sufficient for a preventive maintenance program. Its primary purpose is to show how well the driver and the owner are meeting school bus specifications.
3. The establishment of a bus maintenance program is the responsibility of the school administrator for school-owned buses and the owner of the bus for contracted buses. The program should provide for servicing on a regular monthly or mileage schedule plus special servicing as the need arises.
4. Daily inspection for defects, especially for those that could cause accidents, is the responsibility of the driver. Every driver must make daily checks of the following: steering mechanism, brakes, flashing signals, directional signals, lights, oil level, water level, battery level, instrument gauges, tires, windows, mirrors, emergency doors, fire extinguisher, and pressure gauge.
5. On each run the driver should note all noises or rattles and any unusual odors of gasoline or oil so that they can be checked after the run.
6. He must report all defects **immediately** to the transportation supervisor or school administrator. The driver is the only person who is in a position to note certain discrepancies at the time of their occurrence. Prompt reporting by him and subsequent correction will keep the bus in safe and dependable operating condition and will frequently prevent the necessity for future major repairs.

7. At the end of the school year the driver should check the bus against the Highway Patrol inspection form and report deficiencies to the transportation supervisor and school administrator. On the basis of this report the bus should be completely overhauled during the summer so as to be ready for inspection and for dependable operation in the fall.

BUS SANITATION AND HOUSEKEEPING

1. The driver shall keep the bus clean and sanitary at all times. He shall ventilate and heat it as conditions require.
2. Driving conditions will determine the frequency with which washing and cleaning is needed. However, buses should be swept out daily and kept free from dirt and rubbish. Special attention should be given to the window ledges and seats.
3. The interior of the bus should be scrubbed once a week with a hose and broom.
4. The exterior of the bus should be wiped and polished as often as required to keep the bus neat and clean looking.
5. Great care must be taken to keep windshields, windows, headlights, reflectors and the "School Bus" sign clean at all times. This is a safety precaution as well as a necessary practice in good care of equipment.

BUS RECORDS AND REPORTS

1. The school bus route must be registered each fall. Only registered routes are eligible for state and county reimbursement. The school bus driver must cooperate with the school administrator in filling out the application for registration.

Application forms (Form T-1), provided by the State Department of Public Instruction, are prepared in triplicate and submitted by the school official to the County Superintendent by October 1 and by the County Superintendent to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction on or before October 15th.

2. A map showing the bus route in detail shall be filed in the office of the school administrator and the County Superintendent of Schools.
3. A bus schedule shall be on file in the office of the school administrator.
4. Bus drivers are usually requested by school administrators to keep records of the cost of operation of their school bus and file a report with their administrator.
5. The bus driver should keep records of inspection and maintenance of his bus and make a report to proper authorities of needed repairs which he cannot make himself as soon as possible after they come to his attention.
6. The driver should report all accidents immediately. (See page 20 this Manual for procedure.)
7. The driver should inform the school administrator of discipline problems of any magnitude and discuss with him methods of handling such problems.
8. The driver should report to the administrator any complaints regarding the transportation service that parents or pupils make to him and which he is not in a position to rectify, or suggestions with which he is not in a position to comply.
9. The driver should report any suggestion he himself may have for improving the service.



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Presented to
MONTANA SCHOOL
BUS DRIVERS ASSOCIATION

in recognition of
the outstanding safety
record of transporting

458,457 pupils
126,272,771 miles
totaling
over 21½ trillion pupil miles
without a fatality from 1948
through the 1963-64 year

MONTANA AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION
August 14, 1964

Text of the certificate of award presented to the Montana Bus Drivers Association by the Montana Automobile Association.